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# United States Patent [19]

Lothe

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[54] **SLICER GUIDE**

[75] Inventor: **Arlan D. Lothe**, Sun Prairie, Wis.

[73] Assignee: **McGowan Manufacturing Co.**, Hutchinson, Minn.

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[51] **Int. Cl.**[6] ..... **B26D 7/01**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **83/761**; 83/451; 83/932; 269/289 R

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 83/762, 761, 451, 83/932; 269/289 R, 290, 295, 302.1

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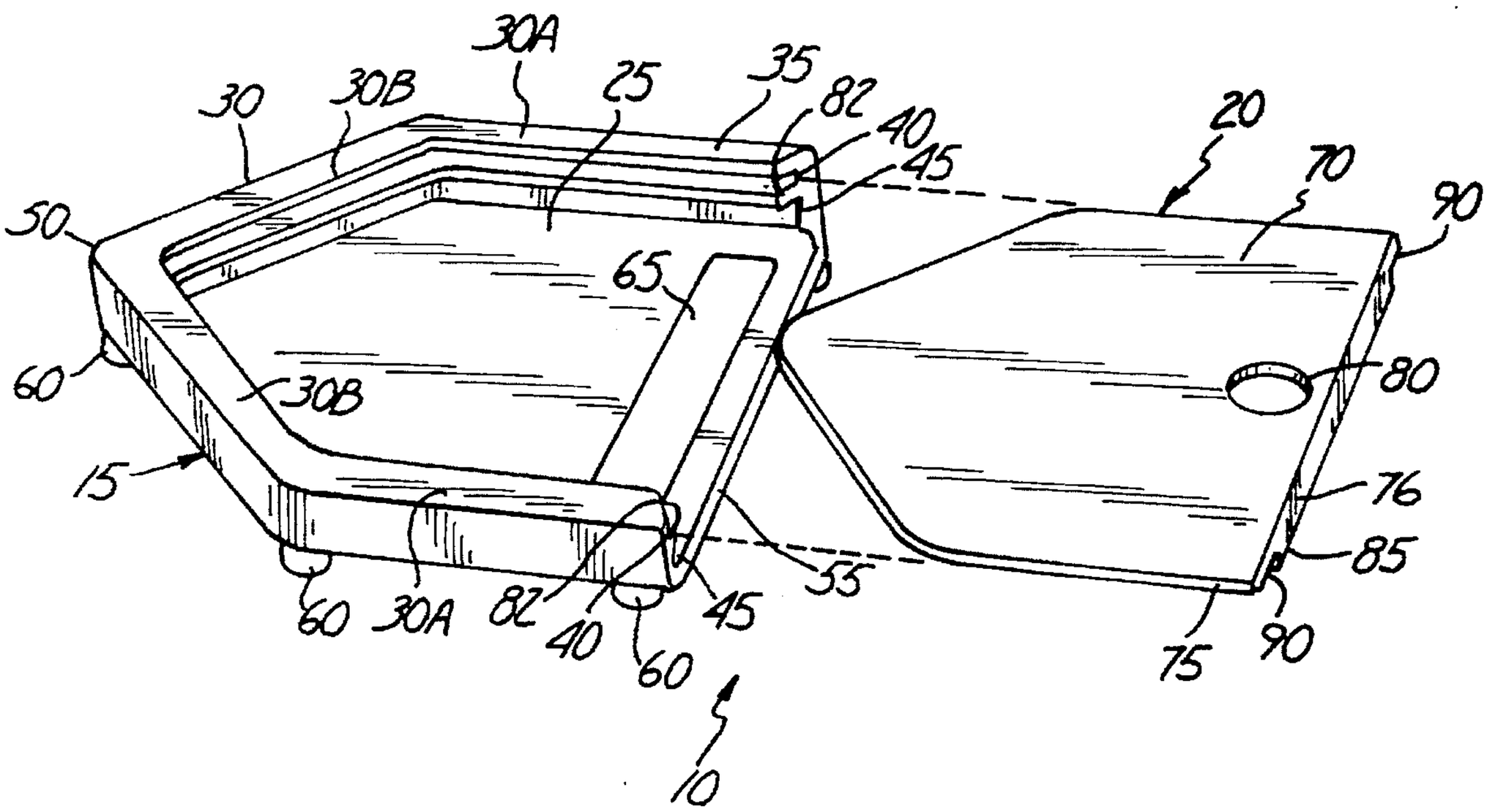
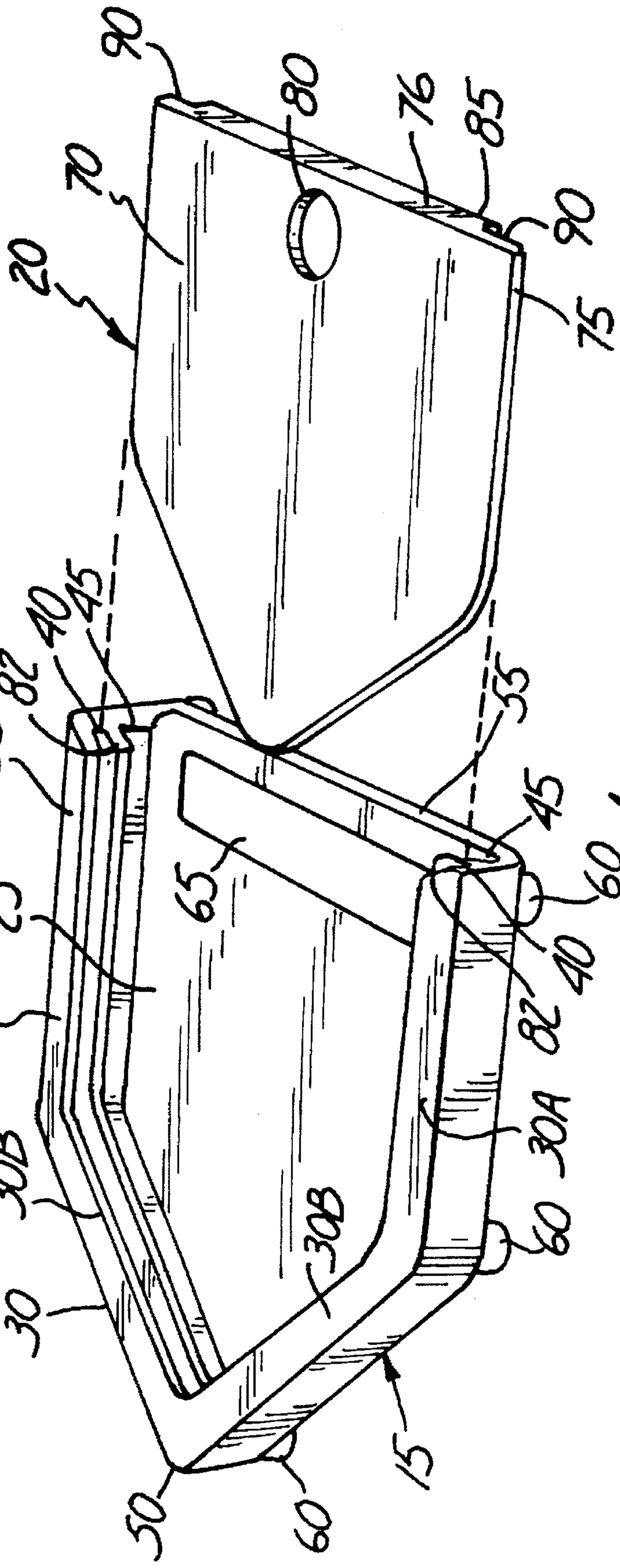
*Primary Examiner*—Rinaldi I. Rada
*Assistant Examiner*—Boyer Ashley
*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Westman, Champlin & Kelly, P.A.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A slicer guide suitable for use with a food item such as a loaf of bread, certain vegetables or the like is provided. The slicer guide includes a base having a generally planar upper surface. A flange is affixed to the base. The flange includes a top surface suitable for guiding a knife as it travels alongside the top surface, and a plurality of spaced-apart generally parallel grooves therein. A cutting board having a generally planar cutting surface suitable for abutting the product to be sliced thereon is adapted for slidable insertion into a selected groove. The slicer guide is used with the knife and the product to provide slices of thicknesses corresponding with the selected groove. The slicer guide is generally used for food items including bread and items such as cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, mushrooms and the like.

**10 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets**




20
80
76
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30A
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Fig. 1

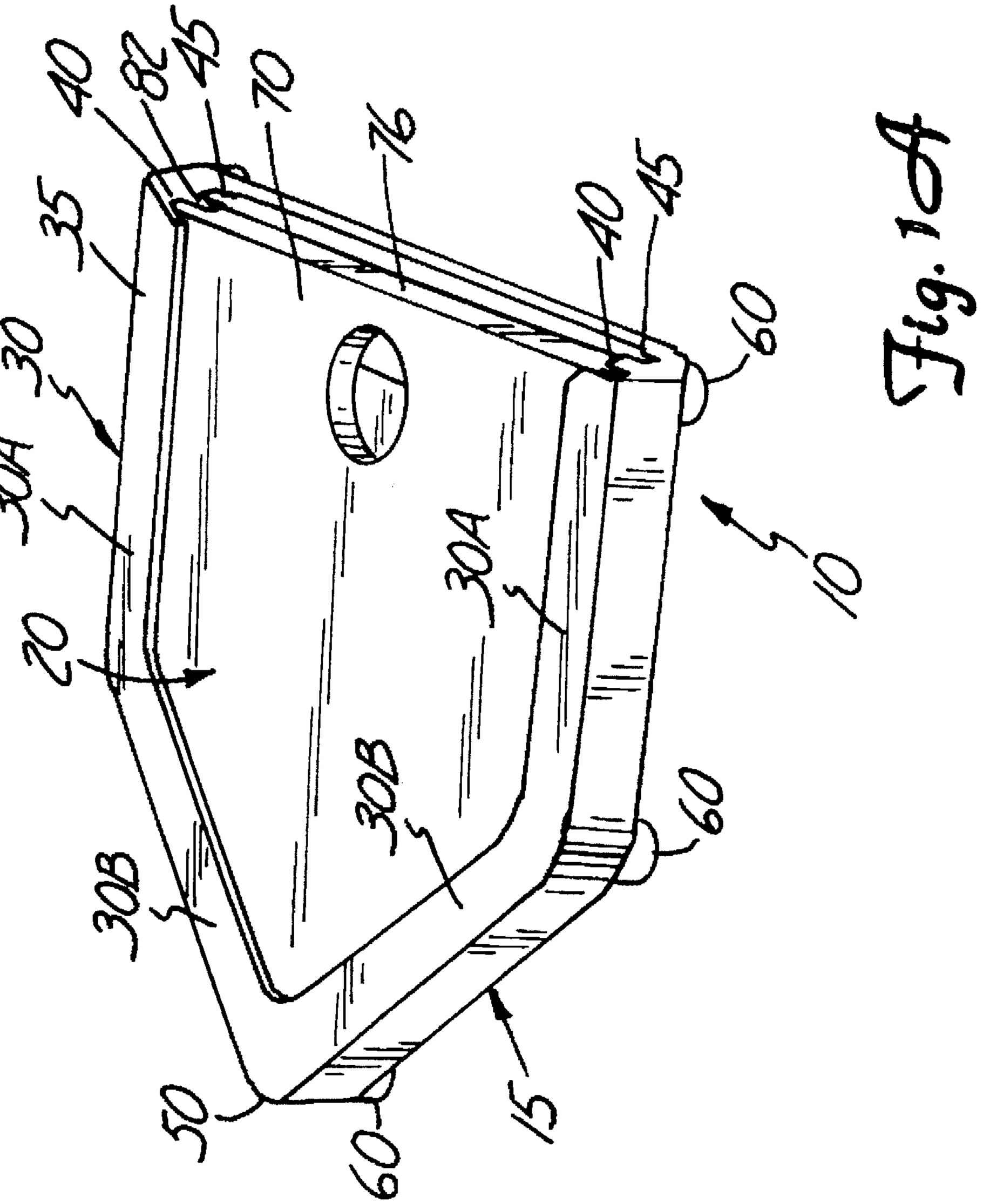


Fig. 1A

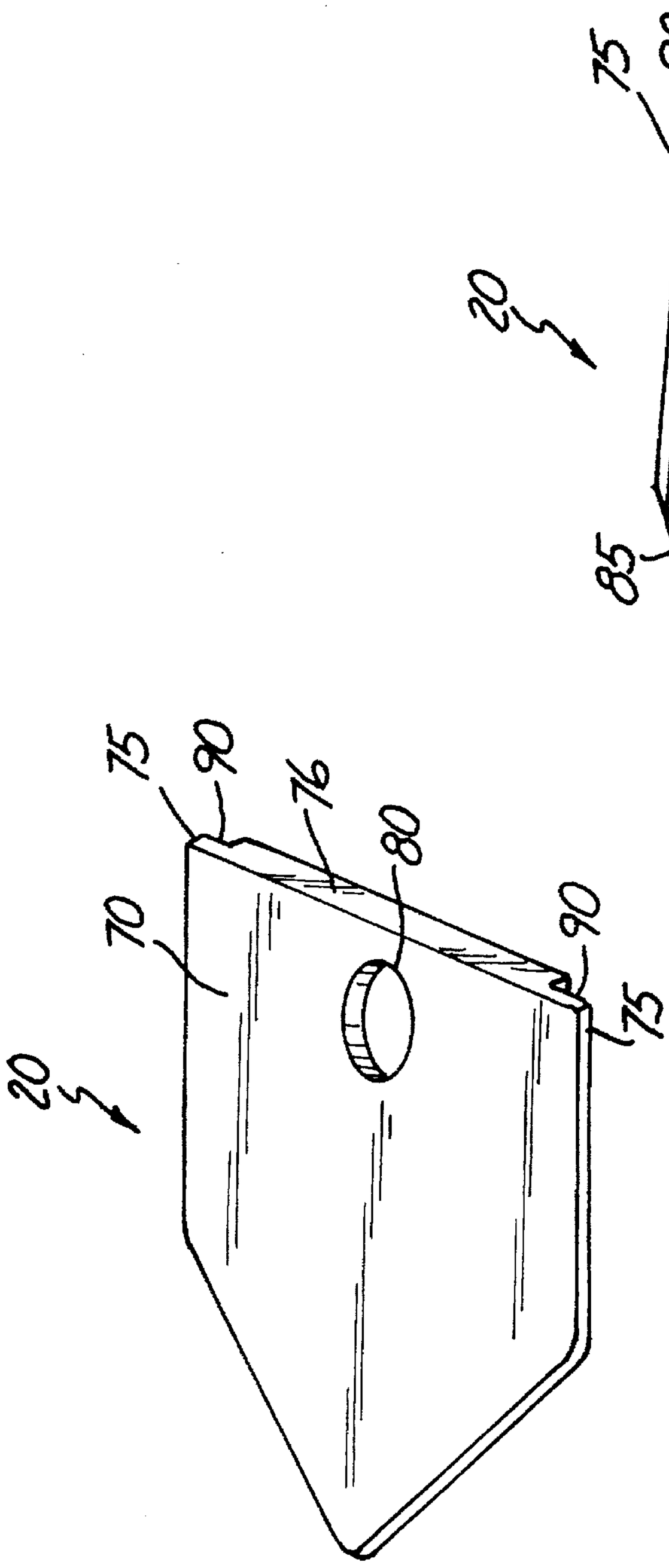


Fig. 2

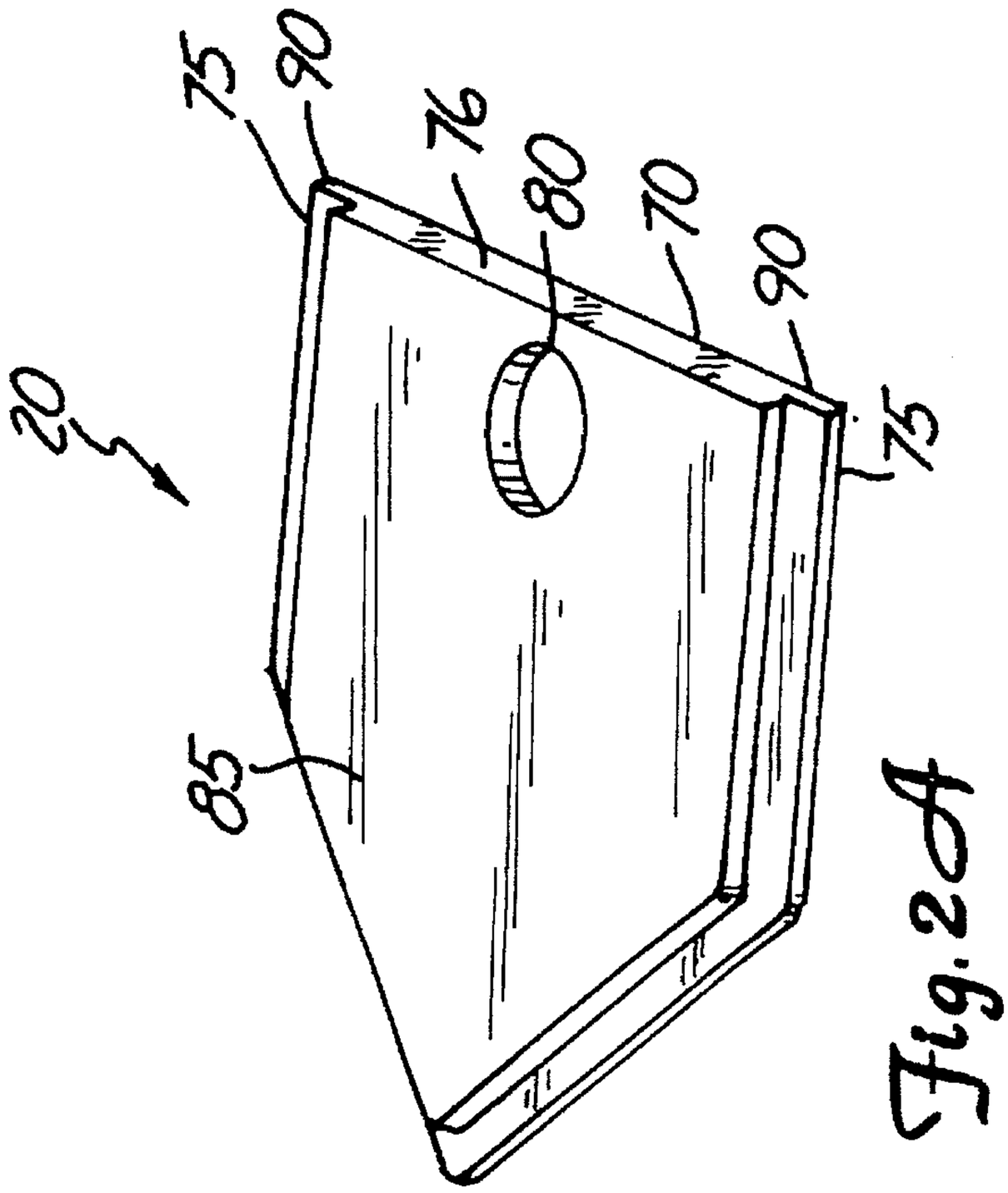


Fig. 2A

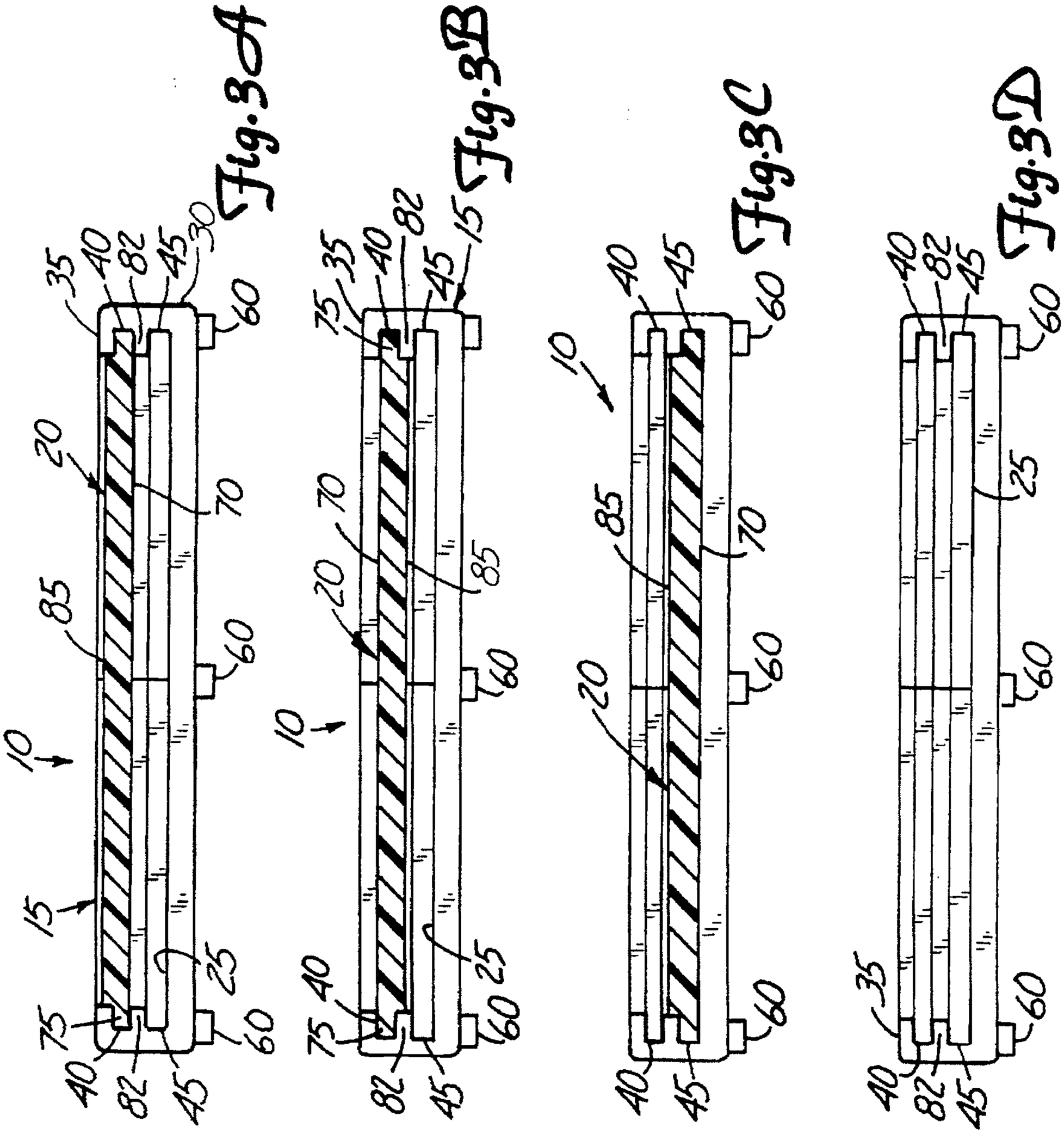
Fig. 3A
Fig. 3B
Fig. 3C
Fig. 3D
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15
20
25
35
40
45
60
70
75
82
85

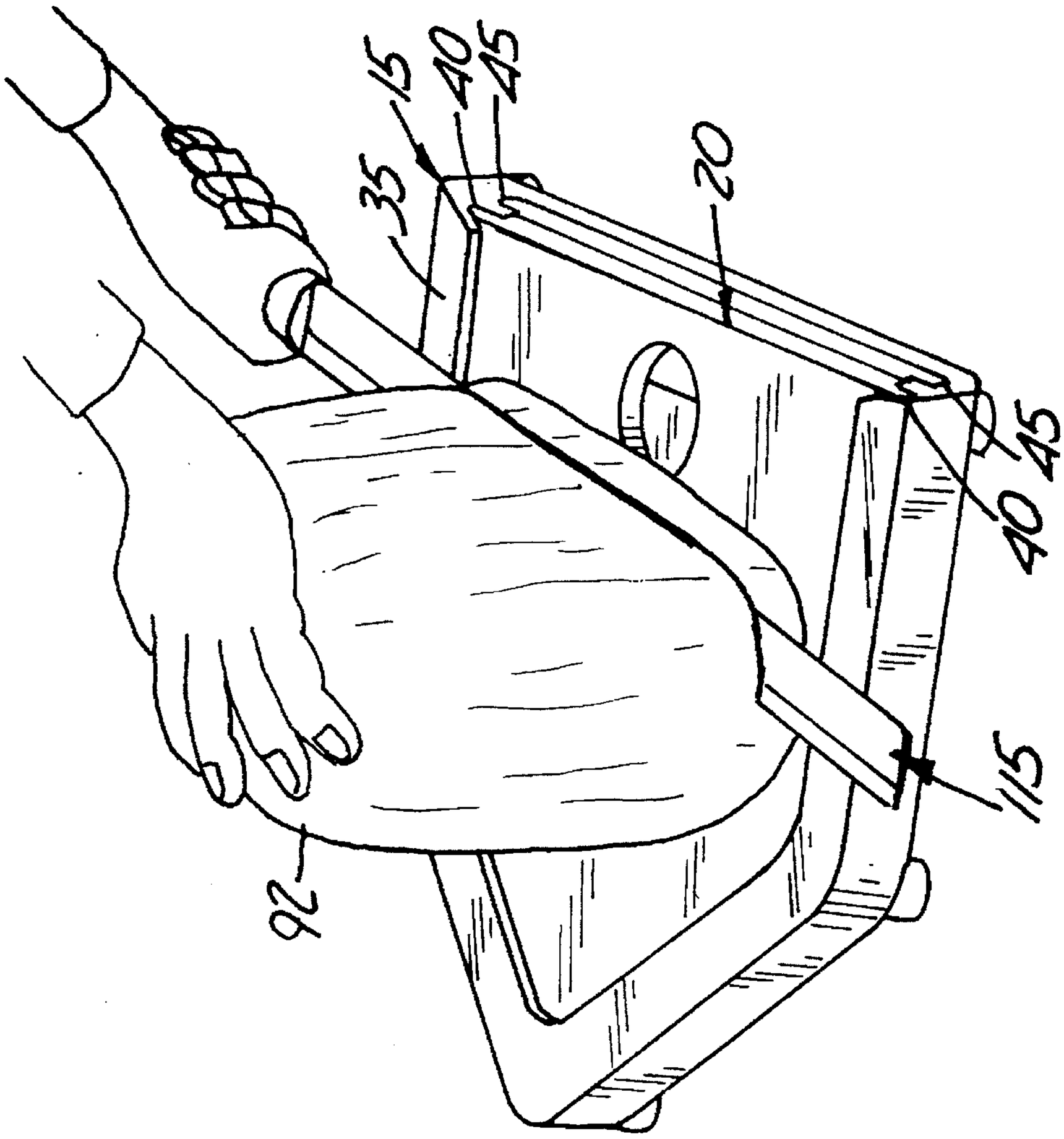


Fig. 4

# SLICER GUIDE

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a device for controlling the slicing of products such as food. More particularly, the present invention relates to a slicer guide that can be adjusted for obtaining different width slices of the product.

The hand slicing of food items is often a time consuming and frustrating process. It is also very difficult to achieve a uniform thickness slice when cutting several slices by hand. It is even more difficult to obtain uniform flat slices if the item to be sliced is a relatively delicate product such as bread or a tomato. It is difficult to cut these food items without damage to the shape or appearance of the product.

When preparing food, often times it is desirable to have several slices of uniform thickness. Also, a food preparer may wish to prepare several items of food in which generally straight slices of different thickness are desired. For this, there is a need for a relatively simple device which allows the food preparer to obtain a number of predetermined uniform-thickness slices wherein the device can be adjusted to the proper size quickly and easily.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a product slicer guide suitable for use with a food item such as a loaf of bread, certain vegetables or the like. The slicer guide includes a base having a generally planar upper surface. A flange is affixed to the base. The flange includes a top surface suitable for guiding a knife as it travels alongside the top surface, and a plurality of spaced-apart generally parallel grooves therein. A cutting board having a generally planar cutting surface suitable for abutting the product to be sliced thereon is adapted for slidable insertion into a selected groove. The slicer guide is used with the knife and the product to provide slices of different thicknesses corresponding with the selected groove. The slicer guide is generally used for food items including bread and items such as cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, mushrooms and the like.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a slicer guide device embodying features of the present invention.

FIG. **1A** is another perspective view of the device of FIG. **1**.

FIG. **2** is a detailed perspective view of a cutting board portion of the device of FIG. **1**.

FIG. **2A** is a view of the cutting board portion of FIG. **2**, with the cutting board inverted.

FIG. **3A** is an end view of the device of FIG. **1** wherein the cutting board is in a configuration for operation and is sectioned for illustrative purposes.

FIG. **3B** is an end view of the device of FIG. **1** in another configuration.

FIG. **3C** is an end view of the device of FIG. **1** in another configuration.

FIG. **3D** is an end view of the device of FIG. **1** in another configuration.

FIG. **4** is a perspective view of the device of FIG. **1** in use.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a slicer guide indicated generally at **10**, comprising a base **15** and a cutting board **20**.



The base **15** includes a base surface **25** and a flange **30**. The flange **30** has side portions **30A** formed by tapered portions **30B** that meet at an endpoint of the flange **30** defines a top, generally planar cutting guide surface **35**. Also, the flange **30** includes a plurality of grooves **40** and **45**. A closed end of the flange **30** formed by tapered portions **30B** is generally triangular shaped and is closed at end point member **50**. The flange **30** also has an open end **55** preferably opposite the point member **50** and formed by the side portions **30A**. A plurality of "non-skid" feet **60** are affixed to the base **15** on the underside of the base surface **25**. The base surface **25** also can include a juice groove **65** near open end **55**.

The cutting board **20** is made to be inserted in either groove **40** or **45** and comprises a generally planar first cutting surface **70** shaped to fit within the flange **30** and has an edge tongue **75** that fits into either groove **40** or **45**, as shown in FIG. **1A** and edge **76**. The cutting board **20** can include an aperture **80** for grasping to insert and remove the cutting board **20** from the base **15**.

The base **15** is preferably constructed from laminated hardwood for strength and to prevent warping. The hardwood is provided with a food-safe oil finish. The base surface **25** is preferably generally planar with the juice groove **65** formed therein. The feet **60** are preferably fastened to the underside of the base surface **25** to provide a non-slip contact with a countertop, table, or the like.

The flange **30** is preferably formed from the same piece of laminated hardwood used to make the base surface **25**. The cutting guide surface **35** on top of the flange **30** preferably is generally planar and lies in a plane parallel to the plane of the base surface **25**. The two grooves **40** and **45** extend the length of the flange **30** and are formed to be in planes also parallel to the base surface **25**. A support member **82** separates the grooves **40** and **45**. The grooves **40** and **45** are wide enough to allow the tongue **75** on the perimeter of cutting board **20** to be inserted therein. The distance from the plane of groove **40** to the plane of cutting guide surface **35** is preferably the same as the distance from the plane of groove **45** to the plane of the groove **40**. In other words, groove **45** is preferably twice the distance from the cutting guide surface as groove **40**. Preferably, the base surface **25** serves to define part of groove **45**.

The cutting board **20** is also preferably planar and can slide within groove **40** or **45** against the groove surfaces in tapered portions **30B** of the flange **30** when fully inserted. The cutting board **20** is preferably made from a food-safe polymeric material such as polyethylene. The first cutting surface **70** is preferably planar.

As shown in FIG. **2A**, the underside of the first cutting surface includes a second cutting surface **85** which is also preferably planar and parallel to the plane of the first cutting surface **70**. The underside surface **90** of tongue **75** is also preferably parallel to the plane of the second cutting surface **85**. The tongue **75** is of an appropriate thickness to fit within one of the grooves **40** and **45**. The thickness of the cutting board **20** between the cutting surfaces **70**, **85** is greater than the thickness of the tongue **75**. The aperture **80** serves as a finger hole for easy insertion and removal of the cutting board **20** into and from the base **15**.

In operation, as shown in FIG. **4**, a food item **92**, such as bread, is abutted against the cutting board **20** inside flange **30**. The food item **92** can be urged against the tapered portion **30B** of the flange **30** for additional support when cutting. A knife blade **115** is preferably layed flat against the cutting guide surface **35** and is used to cut through the food item **92**. The result is a slice of a known thickness made with

a straight cut. The known thickness is the distance from upper surfaces **70** or **80** of the cutting board **20** to the plane of the cutting guide surface **35**. Cutting into the food item **92** a second time, after removal of the first slice, yields another slice having the known uniform thickness. The cutting board **20** can be inserted into groove **40**, flipped end-for-end, inserted into groove **45**, and removed completely to be used for obtaining different thickness slices.

As shown in FIGS. **3**A–3C, the cutting board **20** can be inserted into the grooves **40** and **45** preferably in any one of three possible configurations wherein each configuration is used to obtain slices of different known thicknesses. In each of the configurations shown in FIGS. **3**A–3C, respectively, the cutting surface **70** or **85** is at a different distance from the cutting guide surface **35**. Typically FIG. **3**A gives a ⅛ inch thick slice and slices of ¼", ½" and ¾" are produced in the configurations of FIGS. **3**B–3D, respectively.

In FIG. **3**A, the second cutting surface **85** is toward the cutting guide surface **35** and the first cutting surface **70** is toward the support member **82**. The configuration can be used for cutting relatively thin slices, such as slices of provolone as needed. In FIG. **3**B, the cutting board **20** is flipped end-for-end so that the first cutting surface **70** is toward the cutting guide surface **35** and the second underside shoulder surface **90** is resting on the support member **95**. This configuration is used to obtain a slice that is thicker than that obtained with the configuration of FIG. **3**A, and can be used, for example, when cutting slices of bread. In FIG. **3**C, the cutting board **20** is inserted into groove **45** and the second cutting surface **85** is toward the cutting guide surface **35**. In the configuration of FIG. **3**C, the first cutting surface **70** rests on the base surface **25**. The configuration of FIG. **3**C can be used, for example, when cutting thicker slices of bread and for specialty breads. The greatest distance from the cutting guide surface **35** is achieved if the cutting board **20** is removed entirely as shown in FIG. **3**D. This configuration yields the thickest slice and can be used, for example, when cutting texas toast or slices of french bread.

The slicer guide **10** includes several beneficial features. A finger hole is provided for easy insertion and removal of the cutting board.

Also, when cutting fruits, vegetables or meat, juice from the food item drains from the cutting surface **70** or **85** and is collected in the juice groove **65** to keep the work area clean.

The slicer guide **10** has many advantages. Among these include providing a means for obtaining slices of approximately the same width. Slices of approximately the same width provide more uniform cooking or controlled portions. When uniform slices are not desired, the cutting board **20** can be removed from the base **15** and used by itself. The materials used in fabricating the slicer guide **10** can be easily cleaned by rinsing with water or washing by hand. The rubber feet **60** provide support and firm contact with countertops, tables, or the like. Those with a limited range of motion in hands and arms find use of the cutting surface helpful when cutting food. Also, slice thickness can be adjusted quickly and easily.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments, workers skilled in the art will recognize that changes may be made in form and detail without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

**1**. A slicer guide, suitable for use with a sliceable food item and a blade, the slicer guide comprising:

a base having a generally planar upper surface suitable for abutting the food item thereon;

a flange affixed to the base, the flange having:

a top surface spaced-apart from the base and suitable for guiding the blade when sliding along the top surface; and

a plurality of spaced-apart generally parallel grooves formed therein, the grooves being spaced-apart from the top surface and the base; and

a cutting board having:

a generally planar first cutting surface also suitable for abutting the food item thereon;

a generally planar second cutting surface also suitable for abutting the food item thereon;

an edge proximate the first cutting surface and the second cutting surface;

a tongue having a first tongue surface and a second tongue surface, the tongue affixed to the edge wherein a first distance from the first tongue surface to the first cutting surface is different from a second distance from the second tongue surface to the second cutting surface; and

wherein the tongue is slidable within and into a selected groove in a first orientation having the first-mentioned cutting surface toward the upper surface and in a second orientation having the second cutting surface toward the upper surface to provide varied thickness corresponding with the orientation of the cutting board within the selected groove.

**2**. The slicer guide of claim **1** wherein the flange is formed into a generally triangular shape at one end and having an open end for insertion of the cutting board.

**3**. The slicer guide of claim **1** wherein the first tongue surface is coplanar with the first cutting surface.

**4**. The slicer guide of claim **1** wherein:

the top surface of the flange lies in a plane generally parallel to the upper surface of the base; and

the grooves of the flange are generally parallel to the upper surface of the base.

**5**. The slicer guide of claim **4** wherein the base includes a juice groove formed therein.

**6**. A slicer guide comprising:

a flange having:

a generally planar cutting guide surface for guiding a blade traveling thereon; and

a plurality of spaced-apart grooves, formed in the flange and disposed generally parallel to, but spaced-apart from, the cutting guide surface; and

a removable cutting board having:

a peripheral edge;

a tongue having a first tongue surface and a second tongue surface generally opposite the first tongue surface, the tongue disposed along at least a portion of the peripheral edge;

a first cutting surface; and

a second cutting surface wherein a first distance from the first cutting surface to the first tongue surface is different than a second distance from the second cutting surface to the second tongue surface;

the removable cutting board for insertion in one of two orientations with respect to the flange by sliding the tongue into a selected one of the grooves.

**7**. The slicer guide of claim **6** wherein the first tongue surface is coplanar with the first cutting surface.

**8**. The slicer guide of claim **6** wherein the flange includes a generally triangular-shaped end and has two spaced apart

side portions defining an open end suitable for accepting the insertion of the cutting board.

**9**. The slicer guide of claim **6** wherein the cutting guide surface is generally planar and the slicer guide further comprises a generally planar base affixed to the flange wherein the base is generally parallel to the cutting guide.



**10**. The slicer guide of claim **9** wherein the base includes a juice groove in an upper surface thereof.

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